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ABSTRACT

This booklet addresses minority group teachers and teacher candidates and provides information on the career opportunities that are available in independent elementary and secondary schools. A brief description of private schools includes notes on how they differ from public schools in governance, finances, curriculum, and student and faculty selection. In a discussion of what independent schools offer minority teachers, it is pointed out that their active participation as role models, advisors, and counselors to the growing number of minority students in these schools is valuable. An outline is given of professional qualifications and personal qualities independent schools expect of their teachers. Suggestions are made on conducting a successful job search in the area of private education. Resources offering information are listed under three headings: directories, general readings, and organizations. (JD)

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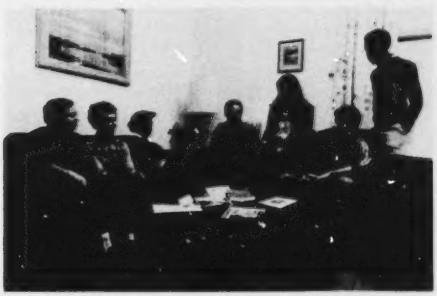
Minority Leaders for Independent Schools



Bobette Reed Kahn
William L. Dandridge

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On the cover. Bobette Reed Kahn, admission officer, and students at Choate Rosemary Hall, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Additional copies of this booklet are available free from NAIS, 18 Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108.

Minority Leaders for Independent Schools

Why should you consider independent education?

The NAIS Minority Affairs Committee addresses this question to you as someone who is considering a career in education and as a member of a minority group. With the help of minority people and others currently teaching in independent schools, we have created this booklet to give teachers and teacher candidates from minority groups information on the career opportunities that are open in independent elementary and secondary schools.

The NAIS Minority Affairs Committee, A Better Chance, Inc., and Independent Educational Services are cosponsoring a special information and employment service for minority teachers. Details on this service are given on page 15.

What are independent schools?

"Private school" is probably a more familiar term than "independent school," which most people now seem to prefer. An independent school is a nonprofit institution governed by a board of trustees that depends almost entirely on private funds—tuition, gifts, grants—for its financial support.

Most independent schools are accredited by their regional accrediting group and state department of education. All must meet state and local health and safety standards as well as the mandatory school attendance laws.

Unlike public schools, independent schools are not involved in or part of large, formal systems. They do, however, share many informal

contacts among themselves and with public schools. The vast majority offer programs that prepare students for college.

Independent schools vary greatly in purpose, organization, and size, and they serve students from all racial, religious, economic, and cultural backgrounds. Some are progressive and innovative, some are conservative and traditional. They are both large and small, day and boarding, single-sex and coeducational. Independent schools have been

Larry Taylor
Art teacher

Choate Rosemary Hall
Wallingford, Connecticut

Working at a preparatory school is an exciting and profitable career. The system is not without its highs and lows or pros and cons, but it can be a source of great personal satisfaction and assistance to the youth of today if those who choose to work there are conscientious, efficient, enthusiastic, and, above all, imaginative enough to adapt the system to their own personality.

As an adult at Choate Rosemary Hall, I feel that it is my responsibility to cultivate in the students a sense of concern and respect for others. These are the most valuable qualities a student can possess, for they are the basis of a healthy and humanitarian society. More specifically, as a minority adult, I believe it is my charge to inculcate in minority students a sense of pride, self-respect, and worth.

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an integral part of our nation's educational resources since colonial times.

Since each school is free to determine and practice its own philosophy of education, spirit and environment vary from school to school, even though they may display similar organizational structures and educational programs. This diversity among schools is one of their most distinctive characteristics.

How do independent schools differ from public schools?

While all schools have students as their primary concern, they differ substantially in their interpretation of objectives and approaches. Here are some of the basic differences between independent and public schools.

Governance

- *Independent schools.* Each school is incorporated as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation and governed by a board of trustees that selects its own members, determines the school's philosophy, selects the chief administrative officer, and bears ultimate responsibility for the school's resources and finances. The chief administrator responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school may be called the headmaster, headmistress, president, or principal. The head's duties are comparable to those of a public school superintendent.
- *Public schools.* Each state determines the number and size of local school districts as well as the rules and regulations that govern the operation of schools and their personnel. Local districts select a committee or board of local citizens to supervise the operation of their schools.

Finances

- *Independent schools.* Tuition is the primary source of support. Additional sources of income are gifts and grants from parents, graduates, foundations, and corporations. Independent schools receive no direct public funds.
- *Public schools.* State and local taxes are the primary sources of funds. The federal government also provides grants for special programs and services.

Curriculum

- *Independent schools.* Each school designs its own curriculum. The majority offer college preparatory programs. Independent schools may provide instruction in areas that are not appropriate for or permitted in public schools, such as religion.

• *Public schools.* The curriculum is determined by the state department of education and the local district's central office. The curriculum must include offerings that are appropriate to the needs of all children in the district.

Student selection

• *Independent schools.* Each independent school selects those students who it believes will gain most from its educational program. Boarding schools have the special opportunity to serve

Betty Ann Workman
Kindergarten teacher

Germantown Friends School
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

The children in my classroom over the years have continually presented me with new challenges to my creativity, my ingenuity, and my inventiveness. They have created a laboratory for refining new ideas and rejuvenating old ones. They have helped to reduce my adult cynicism with their childish innocence and wide-eyed confrontation of the world as it is and not as we think it ought to be.

As a minority adult in the independent school setting, I feel I have a major obligation to broaden the educational vistas of all my students, especially as they relate to the black experience. It is also important for me to be able to support my colleagues in helping to solve problems and assuage concerns about minority social phenomena.

Those of us who have chosen to teach made that choice based on the notion that we would become the permanent and personal advocates of children. We have chosen to set paths of instruction and open new avenues of expression, both academically and emotionally.

In an independent school we believe we must have teachers who are academically skilled, like children, and perceive their role as influencing the development of children both in and out of the classroom.

Richard F. Barter, Collegiate School, New York

students from all parts of the country as well as those from foreign countries.

- *Public schools.* For the most part, where students live determines the school to which they are assigned.

Faculty

- *Independent schools.* Each school develops its own criteria for selecting and evaluating teachers. Certification is not required in most states.
- *Public schools.* Each state department of education establishes standards for teachers, and local districts may add to these requirements as they see fit. State certification is required.

What do independent schools offer their teachers?

We believe the more personal atmosphere of independent schools, the highly motivated students, the support of interested colleagues, administrators, and parents, greater opportunities to develop and shape courses and the curriculum, and the chance to have an effect on the total development of young people are important reasons for you to consider teaching in an independent school.

Minority teachers can play an additional role through their influence on the growing numbers of minority students who are attending independent schools. Their active participation as role models, advisers and counselors, and, in general, supporters of minority young people is important. For all young people, but particularly for white children who have never had the opportunity to work and live with minority people who are in positions of authority, this experience can have a profound effect on their awareness of others and of themselves. The challenge of working with and influencing children is still possible in independent schools.

What do independent schools expect of their teachers?

Independent and public schools differ markedly in their qualifications and expectations for teachers. A college degree and sufficient credits in education courses to meet the state's certification requirements, and passing a national and/or local examination, are typical of most public school districts.

Each independent school establishes its own qualifications and expectations. A small school may need people who can teach two or more subjects and work with students who have different learning styles and abilities. A large school, on the other hand, may want people who can teach a wider range of courses in a particular subject or develop a new course or program.

In assessing teachers, independent schools consider both professional preparation and personal qualities. In looking at professional preparation, they seek teachers who have above-average college records. Most independent school teachers were liberal arts majors and participated actively in their colleges and communities. Prior teaching experience and advanced degrees improve a candidate's chances, but they are not firm job requirements. The ability to teach more than one subject, to advise students, to sponsor a student activity, and to coach a sport are other important qualifications.

While professional credentials are important, equal weight is given to the personal qualities of the prospective teacher. Because independent schools are concerned with the total development of each child, it is important for the teacher to have a genuine interest in and commitment to all aspects of children's growth.

The small size and informal setting of most independent schools provide ample contact among teachers, students, and parents. Perhaps the most important motivation for a student is the teacher's interest and enthusiasm for the subject. Thus the teacher's values and behavior are important factors in any hiring decision.

The independent school teacher often advises a special group of students on academic, social, or personal development. In a boarding school, the teacher's advisees may live in a dormitory with the teacher, thus offering additional opportunities for working with students. As adviser, teacher, activity sponsor, and coach, the independent school teacher has many opportunities for developing better understanding of students' interests, needs, and abilities. During the interview, the school will be looking for signs that the candidate is willing to assume these important roles.

John C. Esty, Jr., president of NAIS, has this to say about teaching in independent schools: "The teacher is the basic unit; the basic in-

> Another quality that is essential is the ability to work well with other adults, for working effectively with parents and fellow teachers is certainly key to being a fine teacher.
>
> **Waldo Jones, Rippowam-Cisqua School, New York**

teraction is between teacher and student. Independent schools believe that significant teaching and learning happen all the time—on playing fields, in activities, in the dormitories of residential schools, in a quiet stroll with a teacher. We believe that teaching and learning are not bound by time clocks or classroom space. Most teachers rank good relationships with students as the most important element in their job satisfaction."

Here, in outline form, are the qualifications and qualities independent schools seek in candidates for teaching positions.

A. Professional criteria
   1. Bachelor's degree; priority given to those with advanced degrees
   2. Prior teaching experience—helpful but not required
   3. Ability to teach more than one subject and a variety of courses within a subject area
   4. Ability to work with students of differing abilities
   5. Commitment to teaching at the precollege level

B. Personal qualities
   1. Genuine interest in working with children, the total child
   2. Good communication skills, both oral and written
   3. Professional curiosity, desire to improve skills and grow professionally
   4. In a boarding school, willingness to live in a dormitory
   5. Interest in working with students on special projects, advising student activities, and coaching a sport

Next steps: Where to begin?

In offering the following suggestions about how to conduct a successful job search, we must emphasize that there is no one way to go about it. We can, however, indicate a general pattern to follow.

Preparing a resume

- Resumes vary in style, but a good resume always includes the following items: statement of career objectives, full educational history, complete employment history, professional and community affiliations, social activities, honors, publications, basic personal information, and a list of references.
- In listing people as references, always be sure that each one is will-

Cathy Royal
Upper school coordinator

Friends School in Detroit
Detroit, Michigan

The biggest challenge in working at Friends School in Detroit comes in maintaining a continuous commitment to our school's Quaker philosophy that diversity and individuality are important in a school's educational program and community. This commitment is reinforced by the pleasure and pride I experience in working in a multicultural, multiracial school.

In gaining experience in school administration, I have come to realize the real need for black men and women in independent schools. Black children need role models as comrades, counselors, school heads, and just plain friends. As a minority woman working in independent schools, the role of "adult model" is very important as one that sets examples, provides leadership, and allows me to be a friend to students and be willing to face sensitive issues honestly with them as the need arises. Black adults must become part of the support system that is needed for black students to be successful while pursuing their educational goals.

I am looking for teachers who are multi-talented people with multiple interests, who are committed to the total development of children, and who are willing to pick up the many extra jobs that inevitably must be done in order for independent schools to function.

David D. Blanchard, Tower Hill School, Delaware

ing to serve as a reference and aware of your plans and that his or her address and telephone number are up to date.

• Guidance on preparing a resume is available in a number of commercially published handbooks and in the placement offices of colleges and universities.

Gathering information on independent schools

• An important first step is to make a list of your preferences: type of school, geographic area, size, philosopy, type(s) of students served, grade levels, and subject areas.

• Consult the directories of independent schools listed below in the "Resources" section, most of which are available at the reference desk in your public or college library. Using your preferences as a guide, develop a list of the schools that meet your criteria.

• Talk to any of your friends who have attended an independent school and to neighbors and family members who have had contact with independent schools. Ask them to give you an introduction to their school.

• Ask your college or university placement office for information. Many college placement officers have contacts in independent schools, and you may find copies of school profiles and catalogues in the placement office.

• Investigate the services of a teacher placement agency. Many independent schools use professional placement agencies to find teachers. One such agency, Independent Educational Services, of Princeton, New Jersey, is participating in the special minority teacher recruitment service described below on page 15.

• Consider teaching in a summer program at an independent school. If you are interested in boarding schools, or are new to independent

education, a summer experience can give you a small sample of life at an independent school. This is particularly important for anyone who may have dormitory responsibilities.

Getting in touch with the school

- Write to the heads of the schools on your list to tell them of your interest in their school. In your letters, which should be typed individually, you should briefly state what type of position you are seeking and why you are interested in that particular school.
- Enclose your resume, which may be printed or duplicated.
- Ask for an appointment to visit the school and be interviewed.

Don Chin
Headmaster

Wasatch Academy
Mount Pleasant, Utah

My role as an adult is to be the model, the "adult guarantor." As adolescents struggle through their particular state of identity and role crises, I must be ready to provide a model.

My role as a minority adult is to exhibit pride in my own heritage and to capitalize on my unique position in paving the way for fair play and tolerance.

> Of great importance is a person's dedication to a career in secondary education. We see teaching as a demanding way of life with long hours and intensive involvement with people. It demands much of a person's talents and patience.
>
> **William E. Chauncey, Roxbury Latin School, Massachusetts**

Preparing for the interview

- Find out as much as you can about the school before the interview from directories, the school's catalogue, and materials the school sends to prospective students. Pay special attention to the school's philosophy, founders, type(s) of students served, special programs, and facilities.
- Consider how the above match your concerns and what special skills you might bring to the school.
- Be prepared to discuss your teaching style, your academic and social expectations for students, and your reasons for wanting to teach in an independent school, and a particular independent school.

The interview

- An interview allows you and the school to ask questions and establish rapport. Be prepared. Make a list of questions. It is better to pursue anything that is not clear at this point than to lose out on an opportunity because of a misunderstanding.
- Most schools will expect you to spend a full day on campus and meet various administrators and teachers. You may also have time to visit classes.
- At the end of the interview, be sure that you understand the next steps and who is responsible for following up: Are you expected to provide more information? Is the school going to get in touch with you? How soon may you expect to hear from the school?
- Writing a thank-you note after the interview not only is "the right thing to do" but also gives you another opportunity to ask new questions and to summarize your understanding of next steps.

A professional approach to your job search is important. Your letters and resumes should be neat and your information clear, accu-

rate, and concise, for their appearance and content may determine whether you are invited to the school for an interview. You should return calls promptly and acknowledge letters as soon as possible. If you have to change an appointment, you should notify the school immediately.

Salary and benefits

It is difficult to provide detailed information on salaries because each school determines its own salary range. Historically, salary questions have been the private concern of the school and the individual teacher,

Virgil Espino
Chairman of science department

Texas Military Institute
San Antonio, Texas

I am teaching at my school because of the high-caliber and unprejudiced administrators and faculty members who make it a strong environment in which to build and develop the young minds of the future.

As a minority adult, I strive constantly for fairness to all and resentment toward none; to be ever alert not to teach prejudice by favoring any students for reasons other than merit and virtue; and to keep a personal vigil over my life to ensure that a young person may improve by my simple example of word, action, and deed.

We expect our faculty to be strong personal models, and we want them to represent the same general set of values for which the institution stands.

F. Robertson Hershey, Durham Academy, North Carolina

but more and more schools are publishing salary information in their faculty handbooks. A prospective teacher should be aware that independent school salaries are, as a rule, lower than those at the neighboring public schools. If you take the school's total benefit package into account, however, the difference in salaries may be reduced.

Each school bases decisions about its salaries and benefits on its resources. Benefit programs vary considerably, but nearly all schools offer health and retirement programs. The most common health plan is Blue Cross/Blue Shield. The Teachers Insurance and Annuity Association (TIAA) and its companion plan, the College Retirement Equities Fund (CREF), are the most common disability and retirement plans offered through schools.

Boarding schools, and a few day schools, offer housing in dormitories or other school-owned property rent-free or at a substantial reduction. Meals for teachers and their families in the school's dining hall can be a major benefit. Tuition remission is another important benefit. And many schools provide grants to teachers for graduate study, participation in professional organizations, and special projects.

Beginning teachers' contracts are for one year. While independent schools have no formal tenure system, some schools give multiple-year contracts once a teacher has successfully completed three or four years at the school. The school's faculty handbook should provide detail on the school's salary and benefits program and on teacher evaluation.

Special employment service for minority teachers

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), a voluntary membership organization of more than 900 elementary and secondary independent schools in the United States and abroad; A Better Chance, Inc. (ABC), a special program that recruits minority students from economically disadvantaged situations for independent schools

and a group of select public schools; and Independent Educational Services (IES), a national placement service for teachers and administrators, are cosponsoring a special recruitment and placement service for minority teachers.

Representatives of NAIS, ABC, and IES are available to meet with interested candidates. Those who wish placement assistance may complete the two-page Minority Search Application, which is available from NAIS, ABC, and IES. This application, together with an up-to-date resume and list of references will form the placement dossier that IES uses in working to match candidates and interested schools.

Faith Chase
Primary teacher

Shady Hill School
Cambridge, Massachusetts

The exposure to different ideas, peoples, surroundings, and intellectual stimulation cannot help but motivate one.

To be honest, I must say that teaching in an independent school has been a mixture of joy, frustration, friendship, loneliness, and lots of hard work.

A teacher should be concerned not only about how people learn and what they are learning but also about what they are learning for. There should be some philosophic purpose informing this activity. A teacher should have clearly in mind, even if his students aren't ready to understand, why it is that he is teaching addition, geography, or morphology.

Edward R. Kast, Germantown Friends School, Pennsylvania

The address of IES, which serves as the clearinghouse for dossiers, is 80 Nassau Street, Princeton, New Jersey 08540. For those calling from outside New Jersey, the number is (800) 257-5102; within New Jersey, the number is (609) 921-6195.

To get in touch with NAIS, write to 18 Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108, or call (617) 723-6900. To reach ABC, write to 739 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116, or call (617) 536-5270.

Resources

Resources are listed under three headings: Directories, General Readings, and Organizations.

Directories

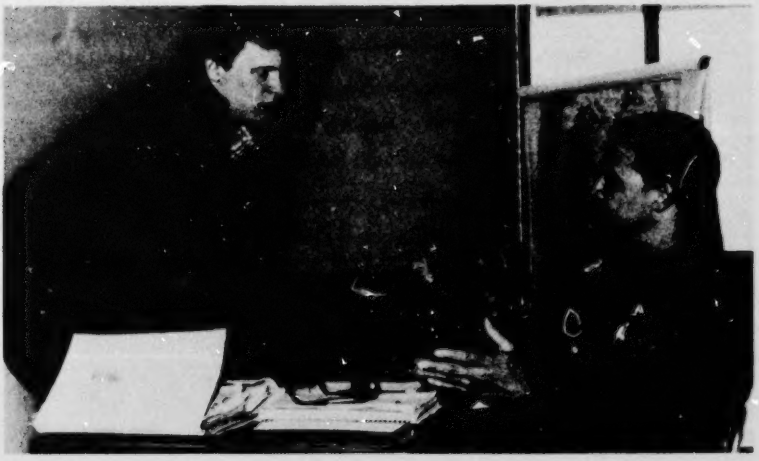
Boarding Schools. Published annually by the Committee on Boarding Schools, a joint activity of the National Association of Independent Schools and the Secondary School Admission Test Board. Provides information on over 200 boarding schools. Available from Boarding Schools, 18 Tremont St., Boston, Mass. 02108; (617) 723-6900. Free.

The Educational Register. Published annually. Contains articles by independent school people on current educational issues and information on independent schools and colleges and summer programs. Available from Vincent-Curtis, 224 Clarendon St., Boston, Mass. 02116; (617) 536-0100. Free.

The Handbook of Private Schools. Published annually. Provides the most extensive listing of private schools in the United States. In addi-

tion to giving brief histories and descriptions of school life, school profiles, arranged by state, contain information on the head of the school, grade level, faculty, number of students, previous year's graduates, tuition, special programs, facilities, endowment, founding date, affiliation (if any), and memberships in educational organizations. Available from Porter Sargent Publishers, Inc., 11 Beacon St., Boston, Mass. 02108; (617) 523-1670.

Independent Secondary Schools: A Handbook. Published every three years by the Secondary School Admission Test Board, which sponsors



Gerald Davis
History teacher

Northfield Mount Hermon School
East Northfield, Massachusetts

Teaching history has been a career aim since my days in public high school, and I especially enjoy teaching history in an independent school like Northfield Mount Hermon because it offers academic freedom to experiment with new teaching techniques and ideas, small classes with highly motivated students, and a physical and social environment that is conducive to developing a harmonious relationship between students and adults.

I have always felt the need to offer leadership to the black community and to the school itself on the special concerns of blacks and other minorities. I was not hired as an adviser of black students or as a teacher of black history, but it is the duty of all black adults in independent schools to get involved in the promotion of minority affairs in some way. Without our leadership, neither students nor other faculty members will attach a sense of urgency to this problem.

A teacher who is in the racial minority within a school must have the same outlook on life that has made for great teachers of all races—exuberance, a sense of mission, a high-quality, broad-based education, and a love of children.

Charles L. Johnston, Trinity School, Georgia

the Secondary School Admission Test (SSAT). Detailed information is presented on those member schools of SSATB that wish to participate. Available from SSATB, c/o Educational Testing Service, Box 922, Princeton, N.J. 08541.

Private Independent Schools. Published annually. Divided into three major sections, describing participating schools, summer programs, and educational associations. Available from Bunting & Lyon, Inc., Wallingford, Conn. 06492; (203) 269-3333.

General readings

The following brief list of books and articles that give information on independent schools reflects differing points of view that may prove helpful.

Baird, Leonard L. *The Elite Schools: A Profile of Prestigious Independent Schools.* Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 1977. An informative, fascinating report on a group of selective eastern independent secondary schools.

Barrett, Joan, and Sally F. Goldfarb. *The Insider's Guide to Prep Schools.* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1979. A youthful, slightly irreverent look at independent boarding schools whose candor provides a refreshing and different view of independent schools.

Boegehold, Betty D. *Education before Five: A Handbook on Preschool Education.* New York: Teachers College, 1978. An excellent resource on the major theories of educating young children, with many of the programs mentioned coming from independent schools.

Esty, John C., Jr. *Choosing a Private School.* New York: Dodd, Mead, 1974. Practical suggestions for examining various types of private schools, with an excellent resource list, directory of independent school organizations and agencies, and bibliography.

Independent School. Quarterly magazine of the National Association of Independent Schools, 18 Tremont St., Boston, Mass. 02108. The best overview of issues and concerns of independent schools, with special center section ("NAIS Reporter") providing brief news of school programs, activities, and nonschool publications and programs of interest to those in schools.

Kraushaar, Otto F. *American Nonpublic Schools: Patterns of Diversity.* Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972. The definitive study of nonpublic schools, containing much supporting data; heavy reading and thus more appropriate for those doing research on private schools.

Kraushaar, Otto F. *From Puritans to the Present.* Bloomington, Ind.: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, Fastback No. 78, 1976. A shorter version of Kraushaar's mammoth study (see above), covering many of the major trends and historical points of nonpublic education.

Organizations

The following organizations offer minority teachers special information on independent schools.

The Black Student Fund, Inc., Hearst Hall, Rm. 247, Mount St. Alban, Washington, D.C. 20016.

Minority Affairs Committee, Independent Schools Association of the Central States, 1400 W. Maple Ave., Downers Grove, Ill. 60515.

Minority Affairs Committee, Independent Schools Association of the Southwest, P.O. Box 52297, Tulsa, Okla. 74152.

Minority Affairs Committee, Mid-South Association of Independent Schools, 1577 Chateau Dr., Atlanta, Ga. 30338.